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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effect of journal keeping on students' self-perception. Eighty-six students in interpersonal communication classes participated in instructional activities for an entire term. Two classes maintained a student journal throughout the course, and one did not. All students completed a self-analysis inventory during the first week of the class and again during the last week. Content analysis of the responses indicated that, compared with those who did not keep journals, the journal-keeping groups increased the positiveness of their evaluations of their own communication behavior. (Author/AA)

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STUDENT JOURNALS IN THE COMMUNICATION CLASSROOM:
A CONTENT ANALYSIS

by

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of journal keeping on students' self perception. 86 students in interpersonal communication classes participated in instructional activities for an entire term. One group maintained a student journal throughout the course and one did not. The journal keeping group increased significantly on a post-test self analysis inventory.

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STUDENT JOURNALS IN THE COMMUNICATION CLASSROOM:

A CONTENT ANALYSIS

Many instructors are now using student journals as a regular part of the basic communication class. In one sense, these journals are a response to critics of classroom games and learning activities. Frequently classroom "games" have been criticized as having no sound theoretical base (see: Smith, 1972 and Weaver, 1974). The student journal is one instructional tool used to link theories with experience based learning (DeWine, 1976).

Initially it is important that we establish a common definition for "games" and "student journals". Previously our terminology has not been carefully delineated and as a consequence instructors and researchers are often analyzing entirely different instructional tools. Many people use the terms instructional simulations, games, learning activities, and simulation games inaccurately.

According to definitions developed by Sivasailam Thiagarajan (1976), a leading author of games and simulations, the most appropriate types of "games" for classroom use are instructional games and instructional simulations. Instructional games are defined as activities involving competition among players with rules, winners, and losers. The characteristic that separates instructional games from common games (ex. monopoly, etc.) is that instructional games have specific learning objectives. Instructional simulations are activities that are representations of reality similar to role playing that also have specific learning objectives. Instructional games and instructional simulations actively involve the student in the learning process as opposed to passive learning, like listening to lectures. Consequently, the author's reference to instruc-

tional games will mean active learning activities with specific behavioral objectives related to increasing communication effectiveness.

The student journal has a number of definitions as well, including both structured and unstructured writing assignments. A student journal is defined as a diary-like record written by each student in the class, reflecting his/her attitudes, feelings, and the expansion of his/her cognitive learning as the course progresses. The instructor either designs the journal himself or uses one of the published journals presently available (see: Phelps and DeWine, 1976; Myers and Myers, 1973; or Rosenfeld, Goldhaber, and Smith, 1975). The journal continually asks the student to reflect on instructional games and see the relationship between the experience in class and a specific theory discussed in the textbook. Thus the journal provides positive reinforcement of learned behaviors while at the same time allowing the student to develop more self awareness. Finally, since the instructor is the only one who reads the journal, the development of an interpersonal relationship between the teacher and the student is encouraged. Keeping this definition in mind, we can examine the potential impact of a student journal on the learning process.

Support for the use of journals comes from a variety of disciplines. Pearson (1965) reports on an experiment at the Menninger Clinic which demonstrated the value of a short daily "directed writing" or log of daily activities as a counseling technique. He suggests that writing or keeping some type of daily journal is an aid to therapeutic growth. His conclusion can apply to the interpersonal communication classroom as well:

A written production usually has a wider social base than an individual therapy session. In this sense, it is more outer-directed for it involves family, peer groups, authority figures, etc. in greater quantities than in the sessions. Since society is the place where the client ultimately makes his life, written productions permit him a wider social integration of analytic material (p. 15).

Other authors make similar claims (see: Bastien and Jacobs, 1974; Leuner, 1969; Phillips, 1966; Tuckman and Ziegler, 1968). In addition, Tebbutt (1970) suggests that a type of journal be used as feedback within an organizational setting. Often personal documents have been produced specifically for research purposes (see: Allport, Bruner, and Jandorf, 1953). Written materials have also been used to make inferences about the personality structure of the author. Baldwin (1942) developed a system called "personal structure analysis" to analyze personal correspondence. Additional researchers have used similar content analysis schemes to analyze personal writings (see: Andrews and Muhlhan, 1943 and Osgood and Walker, 1959). Allport's classic text (1942) and more recently Lauer and Goldfield, (1970) conclude that the following benefits can be derived from some form of self-analytic written tool: self-understanding, released feelings, stimulation for the intellect, facilitated group interaction and group discussion, and elevated self-esteem generating feelings of pride, mastery, self-actualization, and self-fulfillment. Farber (1953) suggests a heightened sense of involvement with one's own ideas when some form of written communication is used and Sainty (1972) concludes that a diary-journal can be an aid to group leaders and counselors.

While the interpersonal communication classroom is definitely not the place for a therapy session, some of the same values gained from this technique, when used for therapy, can also benefit the student of communication. Certainly increased self-awareness, stimulation of the intellect, group interaction and group discussion would be goals acceptable to communication instructors (see: Barbour and Goldberg, 1974; Clark, Erway and Beltzer, 1971; and Galvin and Book, 1972). Victor Raimy (1965) points out that these positive effects can come about regardless of the writing skill of the individual (p. 61).

In the last several years journal keeping has become an integral part of many communication courses. Often authors suggest this type of assignment as a way to evaluate a student's depth of understanding of theoretical concepts taught in the interpersonal communication classroom (DeWine, 1976) or as a way to allow the student to explore his/her own self-awareness and feedback received in class (see: teachers' manual for Brooks' text, 1971, p. VIII; teachers' manual for Keltner's text, 1970, p. 22; and Weaver, 1974, p. 311). Conville's (1977) focus on the individual's experience as a method for learning, lead him to suggest the use of a journal when he concluded, ". . .the 'answers' are to be found in the learner's own experience" (p. 118).

Unfortunately, Conville, like many others, describes the use of a student journal as something that has "worked" in his classroom. Many think that it is an effective concept based mostly on personal experience. As Phelps and DeWine (1976) explain it:

By having students participate in interpersonal activities and then answer questions which ask them to relate their

interpersonal experiences to the theoretical material in their textbooks, we have found that students are better able to understand their own interpersonal behaviors (p. 3).

In addition to these classroom experiences there is some strong theoretical support for the use of journals to help establish new behavior. The application of Kurt Lewin's (1947) model of behavioral change provides us with an appropriate method for analyzing the combined effect of communication theories and experience based learning activities. Change, according to Lewin, can be divided into three steps: unfreezing old behavior, introducing new behaviors (or change), and refreezing new behaviors. During the unfreezing stage the teacher would be concerned with upsetting the equilibrium and loosening the standards of previous behaviors. Both of these concerns must be dealt with or this stage will not be completed. If an attempt is made to disturb the equilibrium without first loosening the standards, the standards will exert extreme pressure upon divergent behavior and the system will soon be brought back to its original level of equilibrium. If on the other hand, an attempt is made to loosen the norms with no effort to disturb the equilibrium, the system will exhibit extremes of focusless behavior. For example, if the instructor hopes to increase students' awareness of nonverbal cues, he/she must introduce new information that disturbs the equilibrium of knowledge about nonverbals. He/she must also create new standards of feedback and observation of others so that students feel free to experiment with the use of nonverbal signals.

Schein (1961) suggests three methods for unfreezing behavior: increase the individual's level of guilt and anxiety, make the individual aware that his/her behavior is "out of line" when compared to others behavior, or remove barriers that cause the old behavior. The

final method seems most appropriate for a learning environment, however, experience based activities could be used for comparison between individual member behaviors and group behaviors as well as allowing social norm barriers to dissipate. New behavior cannot be acquired unless the old behaviors they are replacing can be eliminated. In the interpersonal communication class the experience based learning activities can be used to "unfreeze" old ineffective habits in communication.

During the second stage new behaviors are introduced. At this point attention must also be shown to the equilibrium and the standards. If movement is to continue, it is important that the system not be allowed to formulate an equilibrium and that the standards of the system continue to stay flexible. If they start to become rigid they would exert pressure on the system forcing it to reach a premature level of equilibrium. At the same time, the teacher attempts to maintain an open system for testing alternative behaviors.

In the third stage of the change process, the equilibrium must be reinstated. Refreezing the new behaviors just learned cannot be accomplished if the system is allowed to continue changing since the new behaviors could be quickly eliminated. The use of the student journal is one method of refreezing new communication behaviors. The journal acts to reinforce and consolidate conceptual ideas and consequently refreezes the new behaviors. Schein suggests three ways of refreezing behaviors: reinforce and consolidate, integrate the new behaviors into the system's values, and integrate the behaviors into an ongoing relationship. The feedback that the instructor provides for each student on the journals provides reinforcement and consolidation of theoretical concepts. The interpersonal relationship that is allowed to develop between the instructor and

student, as well as between classmates, serves to integrate new behaviors into ongoing relationships. Consequently, experience based learning activities in combination with a student journal, effectively parallel Lewin's behavioral change process. The activities serve to unfreeze previous ineffective communication behaviors and the student journal helps refreeze new learned behavior.

While there is strong theoretical support for the combined effect of experienced based activities and student journals on behavioral change, experimental testing of exactly what changes take place needs to be conducted. We don't know if this technique works for all students in the same way and more specifically in what ways a student is affected by keeping a personal journal as he/she experiences interpersonal growth. Are students who maintain journals more objective, positive, and analytical about themselves than those that do not? Do the students who keep journals retain more cognitive material from the class? The need for controlled empirical studies to answer these questions and more, is long overdue. Babich (1976) called for such empirical studies when he stated, "In order to argue that the communication journal is likely to produce the specified learning, direct empirical testing of that strategy is needed... Somewhere we need to offer more evidence of the potential efficacy of particular approaches" (p. 11). Sprague (1976) has also suggested the development of a content analysis scheme for testing the effect of journal keeping. Finally Harrower (1965) called for "experimental situations which can be set up to help us become more systematic about the use of (this writing technique)" (p. 46).

The author designed a content analysis as a response to the need for research on the effect of journal keeping. The research

question of interest is: Do the self perceptions of students who maintain personal journals, in combination with experience based activities, differ significantly from those students who do not maintain journals but participate in the same experience based activities?

METHODOLOGY

Three classes of interpersonal communication, all taught by the same instructor, participated in the study. A non-experience based textbook was used and all classes followed the same procedures: lectures, discussions, outside readings, and extensive use of instructional games. Two classes were randomly assigned to the journal keeping condition and one to the non-journal keeping condition for the entire semester. Eighty-six students, mostly freshmen and sophomores, from a variety of disciplines including business, education, health, arts and science, and fine arts, served as subjects. Twenty-eight students in the non-journal keepers group (or NJK) participated in instructional games without journal assignments, while fifty-eight students participated in the same activities but were required to maintain a student journal (Journal Keepers or JK). The NJK completed a term paper, due at the termination of the course, in place of the journal. Each student keeping a journal received written and/or oral feedback on each of seventeen journal entries selected from the Phelps and DeWine (1976) text.¹ All three classes were essentially the same except for the variable of a student journal.

During the first and last week of class all students completed the "Self-Discovery through Self-Analysis" exercise from the Phelps and DeWine journal (see: Appendix A). This questionnaire asks students to assess the over-all effectiveness of their own communication behaviors,

list their strengths and weaknesses as a communicator, describe techniques for overcoming weaknesses, and identify communication situations that cause them the most difficulty. The intent was to compare the NJK with the JK to determine differences in their own self perceptions from the beginning of the class to the end. The specific research question to be answered is: Are there significant increases in students' self-perceptions as regards their objectivity, positiveness, and analytical nature between those who maintain student journals and those who do not?

CONTENT ANALYSIS SCHEME

Holsti (1969) defines content analysis as "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages" (p. 14). In the present instance the researcher was concerned with the analysis of a self-report instrument to identify characteristics of the messages found there. Holsti suggests several types of comparisons that can be made between written documents including a comparison of messages over time "from which the analyst may draw inferences about secular trends" (p. 28) and comparing messages produced by two or more different sources to "relate theoretically significant attributes of communicators to differences in the messages they produce" (p. 30). He also suggests that an analysis of the message can lead us to inferences about the author. "What are the meanings, associations, values, motives, or intentions of the communicator that can be inferred from his messages?" (p. 32). In the present study a comparison content analysis was made of self-analysis inventories (SAI) from the beginning of a class to inventories completed at the conclusion of that same class as well as comparisons between two separate groups of

authors. The intent is to infer characteristics of the authors based on their self-report writings.

The present study calls for analysis of self-report documents in seven areas: self-evaluation (an overall evaluation of the degree of positiveness of the writer's self-analysis), objectivity of measures (how objectively the writer was able to describe measures he/she might use to overcome weaknesses in communication), feasibility of measures (how feasible or possible these measures appeared to be), situation: intimate to public (an identification of whether communication problems occurred more often in intimate one-to-one situations or in public encounters), realism (an evaluation of the degree of realism present in the writer's analysis of why these particular situations cause communication problems), and finally counting the number of communication strengths and weaknesses listed by the writer when analyzing his/her own communication behaviors. These categories were derived from the specific questions asked on the "Self-Discovery through Self-Analysis" form (see: Appendix A). Two graduate students, unfamiliar with the goals of the project, were trained to evaluate the SAI. They completed these analyses independently of each other and without knowledge of the conditions under which the inventories were written. The order in which the inventories were read was random. They used the following SAI evaluation scales:

[INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE]

The evaluation of content units is suggested by Osgood, Saporta, and Nunnally (1956). Their "Evaluative Assertion Analysis" provides a coding scheme that allows the rater to assign values to verbal connectors and common meaning terms. In this instance an evaluation of

FIGURE 1

Journal Analysis Scales

1. SELF-EVALUATION

On the following scale rate the tone of the writer's response to the first question; "How effective are you as an interpersonal communication?"

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
sees self mostly in <u>negative</u> terms			average			sees self mostly in <u>positive</u> terms

2. OBJECTIVITY OF MEASURES

Evaluate the writers response to question #4: "List specific measures which you could take to overcome your weaknesses."

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
writer de- scribes measures extremely subjectively			average amount of objectivity			describes measures extremely objectively

3. FEASIBILITY OF MEASURES

Evaluate how feasible the measures listed by the writer appear to be in question #4.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
measures seem not feasible or possible			average			measures appear very possible and logical

Figure 1 continued

4. SITUATION: INTIMATE TO PUBLIC

Rate how intimate or public the situation is as describe in question no. 5: "Describe situations in which you have the most difficulty communicating."

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Intimate			Social (not intimate and not completely public)			Public

5. WHY DIFFICULT: REALISTIC TO UNREALISTIC

Analyze the writer's response to question no. 6: "Discuss why the situations described in question 5 cause you difficulty in communication." Evaluate how realistic the writer is.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
writer's reasons seem very unreal- istic			average			writer's reasons seem very real- istic

6. Count the number of strength listed for question no. 2.
7. Count the number of weaknesses listed for question no. 3.

the written document (or SAI) was made with the intent of determining changes in self perceptions over time as well as differences in self perception between the experimental and control group.

RESULTS

One of Holsti's (1969) criteria for the validity of categories is that they must be independent, (i.e.) any one categorization of an analysis unit cannot effect another's categorization. To test the independent nature of the categories designed for this study a Pearson correlation test was administered between all combinations of the first five categories (the last two categories, number of strengths and weaknesses, were not included in this analysis since different coding schemes were used for these two parts). As expected, among ten possible correlation scores only one accounted for more than 50% of the common variance.

[INSERT TABLE 1 HERE]

Feasibility and Objectivity had a high correlation ($r=.80$). These two measurements analyzed the same section of the written document and were determined to be not significantly different from one another to be independent. As a result, the feasibility measure was eliminated from further analysis since it was decided that this measure, more than the other (objectivity) was not clearly identified. As a consequence the remaining four categories (self-evaluation, objectivity, intimate to public, and realism) were assumed to be independent separate categories.

It could be argued that there are additional correlations that are statistically significant (self-evaluation and objectivity $=.16$, self-evaluation and realism $=.36$, and objectivity and realism $=.41$ all reach a statistical significance of .01 or greater). However, since the largest

TABLE 1
PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFECIENTS BETWEEN
CONTENT ANALYSIS CATEGORIES

	Self Evaluation	Objectivity	Feasibility	Intimate- Public	Realism
Self-Evaluation		.1689 s=.018	.0483 s=.275	-.1243 s=.062	.3664 s=.001
Objectivity			.8019 s=.001	.0058 s=.471	.4132 s=.001
Feasibility				-.0075 s=.463	.2519 s=.001
Intimate- Public					-.0200 s=.403

of these correlations (objectivity and realism at .41) would only account for 16% of the variance, while measuring two separate parts of the written document, they remain on a conceptual level, independent. The magnitude of r is of primary concern in this case.

Interrater reliability coefficients were derived from Holsti's formula (1969, p. 140). Correct ratings were determined as follows: when the two raters scored a section of the SAI in the same direction for the first five categories and when they had exactly the same number on the final two measurements, their ratings were counted correct. For example, if the two raters each scored an item as either 1, 2, or 3, it was counted as correct, as was true for 5, 6, or 7. When an item was scored as 4 (average) the other rater had to have the identical number in order to be scored correct. For strengths and weaknesses where the raters were simply counting the total number listed, the exact same score had to be recorded in order that they count as correct. Out of a total of 2,170 ratings the two raters made 2,036 correct ratings for an interrater reliability of .93.

The 79 subjects produced a total of 155 SAI with 58 written by the JK group at time one, (first week of class) 46 at time two (last week of class) and 23 written by the NJK group at time one and 28 at time two. The reason for differences in the number completed by each group was due to absences from class on days when pre and posttests were administered.

Since the categories had been determined independent, simple t -tests were conducted between the JK group from time one to time two, between the NJK group from time one to time two, and between the JK and NJK group at time two. Both the JK and NJK groups had significant differences from time one to time two but not in the same categories.

[INSERT TABLE 2 HERE]

The JK group had a significant increase in the positiveness of their overall evaluation of personal communication effectiveness from the beginning of class to the end of the class ($p < .001$).² They also become more realistic about why certain situations gave them more difficulty when communicating with others ($p < .01$). On the intimate to public scale, which identified the type of situation in which they had more difficulty communicating, the group moved from identifying less intimate situations to more intimate ones ($p < .05$). Since both means were below the average level, this is seen as degrees of intimacy rather than moving from public to intimate. In addition the JK group listed significantly more strengths ($p < .05$) at the end of the course and significantly fewer weaknesses. ($p < .01$). The NJK group, on the other hand, had significant differences in two of the same categories (self-evaluation $p < .001$ and realism $p < .001$) but unlike the experimental group did not have a significant difference in the intimate to public scale or either of the strengths or weaknesses scales. The NJK group did have a significant increase on the objectivity measure ($p < .01$).

[INSERT TABLE 3 HERE]

When the two groups were compared to each other on the final SAI significant differences were found between the self-evaluation measure ($p < .05$).

[INSERT TABLE 4 HERE]

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study lend support to the belief that the use of student journals will significantly affect students' perceptions of themselves. The JK increased the positiveness of their own evaluations of

TABLE 2

T-Test for Experimental Group From Time One and Time Two **

Variable	Number of Cases	Mean	Stand-ard De- viation	Stand-ard Error	F Value	2 - tail Prob.	T Value	Pooled Variance Estimate		Separate Variance Estimate		
								Degrees of Freedom	2 - tail Prob.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 - tail Prob.
<u>Self-Evaluation</u>												
Time 1	58	4.28	1.46	1.92	4.40	0	-5.67	102	.000	-6.10	85.47	.000*
Time 2	46	5.61	.70	1.03								
<u>Objectivity</u>												
Time 1	58	5.10	1.06	1.40	1.25	.433	- .19	102	.851	- .19	100.53	.849
Time 2	46	5.41	.95	1.40								
<u>Intimate to Public</u>												
Time 1	58	3.178	1.67	2.20	1.10	.722	2.03	102	.045	2.02	94.45	.046*
Time 2	46	3.09	1.75	2.59								
<u>Realism</u>												
Time 1	58	5.18	1.23	1.62	1.34	.312	-2.68	102	.009	-2.72	101.21	.008*
Time 2	46	5.80	1.06	1.57								
<u>Strengths</u>												
Time 1	58	2.23	.86	1.14	1.38	.254	-1.97	102	.052	-1.93	88.60	.056*
Time 2	46	2.59	1.01	1.50								
<u>Weaknesses</u>												
Time 1	58	2.04	.87	1.14	1.42	.227	2.37	102	.020	2.42	101.64	.017*
Time 2	46	1.66	.73	1.07								

*P < .05

**The t-test for independent samples was used to maintain a higher total N. Thus, the N for Time one and Time two varies due to student absences.

TABLE 3

T-Test for Control Group Time One and Time Two **

Variable	Number of Cases	Mean	Stand- ard De- viation	Stand- ard Error	F Value	2 - tail Prob.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 - tail Prob.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 - tail Prob.
<u>Self-Evaluation</u>												
Time 1	23	3.67	1.04	2.169	1.09	.840	-4.89	49	.000	-4.92	47.83	.000*
Time 2	28	5.14	1.08	2.055								
<u>Objectivity</u>												
Time 1	23	3.91	1.36	2.840	2.48	.026	-2.61	49	.012	-2.50	35.81	.017*
Time 2	28	4.73	.86	1.636								
<u>Intimate to Public</u>												
Time 1	23	3.54	1.38	2.897	1.05	.903	- .07	49	.943	- .07	46.68	.943
Time 2	28	3.57	1.35	2.568								
<u>Realism</u>												
Time 1	23	3.30	1.25	2.625	2.01	.085	-7.23	49	.000	-6.99	38.40	.000*
Time 2	28	5.48	.88	1.676								
<u>Strengths</u>												
Time 1	23	2.26	1.57	3.280	1.31	.501	- .19	49	.850	- .19	44.12	.852
Time 2	28	2.33	1.37	2.598								
<u>Weaknesses</u>												
Time 1	23	1.78	1.15	2.411	2.69	.016	.53	49	.598	.51	34.85	.615
Time 2	28	1.64	.70	1.333								

* $P < .05$

** The t-test for independent samples was used to maintain a higher total N. Thus, the N for Time one and Time two varies due to student absences.

TABLE 4

T-Test Experimental and Control Groups Time Two **

Variable	Number of Cases	Mean	Stand- ard De- viation	Stand- ard Error	F Value	2 - tail Prob.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 - tail Prob.	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	2 - tail Prob.
<u>Self-Evaluation</u>												
Time 1	46	5.61	.70	1.03	2.41	.009	2.30	72	.025	2.07	40.81	.045*
Time 2	28	5.14	1.08	2.05								
<u>Objectivity</u>												
Time 1	46	5.14	.95	1.40	1.21	.605	1.85	72	.068	1.90	61.43	.063
Time 2	28	4.73	.86	1.63								
<u>Intimate to Public</u>												
Time 1	46	3.09	1.75	2.59	1.68	.155	-1.22	72	.227	-1.30	67.84	.199
Time 2	28	3.57	1.35	2.56								
<u>Realistic</u>												
Time 1	46	5.80	1.06	1.57	1.45	.308	1.34	72	.185	1.40	65.18	.166
Time 2	28	5.48	.88	1.67								
<u>Strengths</u>												
Time 1	46	2.59	1.01	1.50	1.82	.075	.93	72	.358	.86	45.09	.394
Time 2	28	2.33	1.37	2.59								
<u>Weaknesses</u>												
Time 1	46	1.66	.73	1.07	1.07	.861	.12	72	.907	.12	58.76	.907
Time 2	28	1.64	.70	1.33								

GROUP 1 = Experimental Group

GROUP 2 = Control Group

*P < .05

** t-test for unequal N was applied.

personal communication behaviors. Not only did their self-evaluation increase significantly from the beginning of the class to the end but also increased significantly more than the NJK group. The number of strenghts increased and the number of weaknesses decreased for the experimental group but not for the control group. It would seem that a continual self-analysis throughout the course in the form of a student journal, results in an overall more positive self-concept as a communicator. After continually relating their experiences in instructional games to theoretical concepts discussed in texts, students appear to have developed a better image of themselves. Since there is more focus on intimate relationships as opposed to public encounters, it seems logical that by the end of the course students in the experimental group would be more concerned with less public encounters thus causing a significant move toward more intimate situations on the intimate-public scale. Both groups became more realistic in their assessment of causes for communication problems. Perhaps because of the nature of the course itself, students became more objective and realistic than previously. The only measure that the NJK group increased that the JK group did not was on the objectivity scale. It is likely that the JK would tend to become more subjective as the course progresses since they are continually involved in a self-analysis process throughout. Since the NJK have not been involved in this type of activity it appears that they become more objective, perhaps reflecting a more general abstract view of interpersonal communication than do the JK. Many instructors feel that maintaining a student journal helps to make the course more personal and practical for students. The results of this project lend support to that theory.

Obviously additional research is needed to further test the use of such instructional tools. In a previous study (DeWine, 1977) an analysis was made between these same two groups of students on a recall and application examination text. The study was an attempt to determine the amount of retention and ability to apply facts to interpersonal situations between the JK and NJK. A significant difference was found between the two groups on the overall test score with the JK scoring higher than the NJK. Further exploration of this variable is needed as well as a content analysis of individual journals.

Using journals in the classroom is a time consuming activity for both the instructor and the student, thus its benefits and possible positive outcomes on student learning must outweigh the effort required for its use. While this study lends partial support for the use of student journals in the basic interpersonal classroom additional measurements must be conducted before making any concrete judgments as to its appropriateness and validity.

FOOTNOTES

1. The following journal entries from the Phelps and DeWine Journal were used: Perception of Instructor, Dyadic Encounter, Communication Model, Perception Formation, Inverted Pyramid, Johari Window, Feedback Exercise #4, My Personal Space, Perception and Communication, Listening with Empathy, Male-Female Game, Conflict Inventory, Helping Inventory, Experiencing Helping, Self Assessment, Trust Walk, Self-Discovery through Self-Analysis.

2. The F test of sample variances has been computed. If the probability for F is greater than α the t based on the pooled variance estimate should be used. If the probability for F is less than or equal to α then the t based on the separate variance should be used. For example, in the case of the self evaluation for the experimental group the F probability is 0 thus the pooled t estimate should be used which is .000. In all instances the significance level is within the same range for the data presented here.

Appendix A

Self-Discovery through Self-Analysis

Objectives To allow you to discover information about yourself through a self-analysis inventory.

To allow you an opportunity for introspection and growth.

Procedure Write brief answers to each of the following questions. Your answers will be used in class discussion. After the exercise is over, you may wish to go back over your answers and expand them.

1. How effective are you as an interpersonal communicator?
2. List your communication strengths.
3. List your communication weaknesses.
4. List specific measures which you could take to overcome your weaknesses.
5. Describe situations in which you have the most difficulty communicating.
6. Discuss why the situations described in question 5 cause you difficulty in communication.

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